The Ladder

OCTOBER, 1957

purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications--this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

OCTOBER, 1957
Volume 2, Number 1

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Growing Pains Don't Hurt!

'Growing Pains' Don't Hurt . . .

While this is the first anniversary of THE LADDER, it marks the end of two years of "growing pains" for the Daughters of Bilitis.

It all began when eight women gathered together looking for a social outlet and some answers to a few of the problems which Lesbians face. And as is inevitable one idea led to another, and the present program of the organization gradually evolved.

The primary problem during the first year was that of meeting new people and spreading the word that the club did exist complete with constitution and by-laws. The going was slow indeed. Although the fact that the Daughters were in existence was an unguarded secret, the word just wasn't getting around. Interest wavered, and membership fluctuated from a low of six to the 15 on the rolls at the end of the first year.

In an all-out push, "do or die" effort, the 15 set up public discussion meetings in a rented hall with professional people invited to speak on the subject of FEAR as it relates to the homophile. For FEAR and the dispelling of it was the immediate problem to be faced if the organization were to be effective and continue to grow.

But setting up the meetings was not enough. How were the events to be publicized so that there would be anyone in attendance? And so THE LADDER came into being as a mimeographed newsletter just one year ago. As the first issue went to press there were 17 paid subscribers (at $1 per year) and a mailing list of some 200 names and addresses including psychiatrists, psychologists, attorneys and other professional people lifted out of the telephone directory. Additions to this list were made as anyone came up with more acquaintances. Members and friends of the Daughters are still asked to supply us with more names and addresses in order that sample issues of THE

LADDER may be sent to introduce the publication and the organization. Since it is not feasible to advertise openly, there is no other way in which to increase THE LADDER'S circulation.

At any rate, this first effort at publishing "snowballed". The mail came in faster than it could be read - let alone answered. The organization as well as the publication was suffering from growing pains. And a handful of not-too-unwilling people were in for a lot of hard work!

By the third issue THE LADDER graduated from the none-too satisfactory (to put it mildly) mimeographed newsletter to a bona fide printed format - the printing taking place before and after working hours in a local commercial concern unbeknownst to the proprietors. In due time (three issues) this arrangement proved to be somewhat confining, and since the circulation was growing steadily each month, the job was farmed out to Pan Graphic Press, where it is still being printed.

During this same period the Daughters of Bilitis applied for and received a charter from the State of California as a non-profit corporation. An office was rented in the Williams Building, quarters being shared with the Mattachine Society. The Daughters were in business!

The public discussion meetings - on fear, employment, the law, and other related homophile problems - met with a favorable response, attendance ranging from 15 to 55. Many men attend these meetings as well.

Then came the need for more intimate, "let the hair down" type discussions, and the Gab 'n Java sessions were born. Attendance at these bull sessions has ranged from 10 to 45.

Social activities are another important part of the DOB program. Aside from the opportunity they afford for getting better acquainted, they have also proved to be very successful in the all-important matter of raising funds. Several "annual" events have evolved during the past two years: the St. Patrick's Day brunch, to which members of

the Mattachine Society are invited; a summer picnic outing; Hallowe'en Party; and New Year's Eve party. During the interim there is bowling scheduled and other events of interest to the group. During the recent Mattachine Society Convention the Daughters entertained delegates and visitors at a cocktail party.

The DOB library, while still rather limited, is now processed and available at the office, room 308, 693 Mission St. The books and periodicals range from strictly homophile subjects to the better-known established classical works. Many subscribers to THE LADDER have generously donated volumes from their own collections or sent funds with which to purchase needed titles. Any such help in this educational and recreational venture is gratefully received.

At the beginning of this third year, the Daughters of Bilitis is launching its first research project. Case histories of Lesbians are now in process on a voluntary basis, the purpose being to provide data on a subject long ignored. Those in the San Francisco Bay Area who would be interested in volunteering as subjects are asked to contact the DOB office, 693 Mission St., Room 308, San Francisco - phone EXbrook 7-0773. For those in outlying areas a questionnaire is being prepared.

It should also be noted here that, while the Daughters of Bilitis is a separate and distinct organization with its own policies and goals, the "growing pains" would have been a great deal more excruciating had it not been for the full cooperation and support of the Mattachine Society and ONE, Inc. Both of these organizations have favored us with encouragement, advice, and publicity, without which the DOB would not have been able to proceed as rapidly as it has.

From a newsletter, THE LADDER has graduated into the classification of a magazine, and as of June 1 the rates were raised from $1 to $2.50 a year. THE LADDER is offering reportorial coverage of the activities of the various homophile organizations, articles relating to or

(Continued on page 27)

HAIL AND FAREWELL

A Story by Jan Addison

When she had hung her ulster in the staff-room locker she took the stairs slowly, for the first time since the doctor said she must. ('Not for the first half-century I won't,' she'd said. And Dr. Eleanor, not joking: 'Want to finish that half-century?' And she: 'Not much, if it means having to die by inches.') Well, yesterday she'd finished it, fifty years at her own pace. Today she was ready to lean back, begin letting her juniors do the running.

She walked into the half-glass office with Agnes Dawes, Associate Director in new gold-edged black low on the panel, and sat down. Technically it was her office three days ago, first of the month, but what with clearing a decade's accumulation out of her old desk, rehearsing her successor, and being coached herself by old Emmy- - (As if five years of Acting Associate Director through vacations and sick leaves weren't enough coaching.

She looked out the window and was as dashed by the serene reach of lawn as though it were the ocean. But through plate glass on the other side was still the old morning turmoil around her desk out there - no, not her desk any more, Lou Brandt's. Agnes Dawes need never again keep afloat in that surf of urgent demands for instant and variegated information. Never again sit exposed eight hours a day at a mill-race public service point.

Never again... A wave of nostalgia sharp as panic invaded her. She hustled a folder out of the deep filing drawer at her right and dived into the Associate Director's annual report. But what use? She'd got all that in hand last month during Emmy's vacation, and couldn't finish it till fiscal statistics were complete. What was there that had to be done? At this instant nothing.

Now it was real panic. What had she let herself in for? Where was she headed now? This office had been the goal for

so long. The top of a hill beyond which one couldn't see. Well, she was up there now. No farther to climb. (For of course no Board in a city this size would ever appoint a woman as Director.) So this was it... Nowhere to go from here. Fifteen years of these glass walls ahead, certain as a prison cell.

She all but snatched the mail from Arvid when he proferred it limply through the door. Anything - but quick - to clear this emotional smog. She riffled the first of the professional journals. Positions Open - no help there. At fifty, ten years in one system behind you, no advertised vacancy could offer advantages. New Library Buildings - dead pigeon. With the Annex added three years ago, there'd be no new ones here in her time. Personal Notes - not one familiar name, all quick rising juniors. It wasn't her baby any longer even to watch for deaths, insert their dates in the biographical volumes and notify the catalog department. But at fifty one watched the obituaries anyhow. So often a name there was familiar.

Lynn Currier? The blow of a fist on the heart. Oh no, no! Why, she's younger than I! ...Or is she?

> (Mary) Lynn Currier, Anglo-American novelist, suddenly, in London, at 53. Miss Currier, born and educated in Oxford, combined woman's college teaching in this country and England with the writing of uncommonly subtle and artistic mysteries. Best known are September Song, Who Travels Alone, and Candle Burning.

But not Quicksands nor Odd Body, Agnes Dawes raged in silent bitterness. Oh no! Never say one good word, anybody, for either of those 'queers'. Though they happen to be the best things she ever wrote. Because in them she wrote what she knew, she'd been there! Girls' dorms, summer camps at the shore... God! Could one ever forget the end of Quicksands - tall, cool Honora walking straight on through the marsh grass as if it were sidewalk, the sleuth following, until without warning the sands took them both. So the girl Cy could go free...

Agnes Dawes thrust her chair back and strode three paces, hands clasped behind her, before a glass wall recalled where she was. She took another step toward her old desk, and

then returned, sat down. No use combing the biographical stuff again, she knew every sentence in print by heart long since, and it came to damned little more than this obituary. Nor need one expect much in addition even now Lynn Currier was gone. Not about a woman unmarried at forty-three, teacher of phys. ed., with those two queer books to her credit.

Lordy, the fever of that first wild futile hunt to learn about her, after finding Quicksands! And the desperate secrecy of the hunt. Just as one had cut classes and rushed the whole way downtown to buy the book in a store where one wasn't known. And read it in a single afternoon, and finished blind drunk on no more than discovering at last that one other person completely understood...

Why didn't I write her then? Again a kind of choking panic. Now I never can. ...Always going to someday, when I found the time - and courage enough to say what had to be said. ...Always seemed there was all the time in the world for it. A sort of treat, saved for the future. And now - you never will.

Her aching throat closed, her eyes burned dangerously. And there were still lunch and four working hours to get through. A fine thing if Old Agate began weeping here in her new fishbowl. She snapped erect and rang down all her inner asbestos curtains. Let the young half-bakes twitter their warnings: Old Ag's blowing up a storm...

Going home she bought a fifth of Seagram's 7-Crown. So much for Dr. Eleanor's calamity howling. (Hell, men, do you want to live forever?") Food was of no more interest than at noon. She spread camembert on a rye crisp or two. Those and the scotch syphon and ice at her right elbow. A fresh pack and the nine-inch ashtray at her left. Then she reached down Quicksands from her shelves, and settled.

At the touch of the now softened shabby covers she shivered. Uncanny to become so utterly again the girl who first read it - her first queer book. Stumbling on that review by accident, running crazy with excitement, making the wild dash to buy it, going the reckless length of lunch at the University Women's Club so she could sit unnoticed in the

lounge afterward, face to the wall, and devour it in one dizzy oblivious afternoon...

'On the Shoreline train going down to The Landing, Honora Williams presently became aware of a rigid, silently freckled poker-face turned stubbornly to the window.' No need of opening the book for that first sentence! Nor scarcely for much of what followed. Nevertheless she opened it, and began to read slowly, luxuriously, savoring each loved phrase, never skipping a word. If its three-hundred-odd pages kept her up all night, so be it. This was her tardy rendezvous with Lynn Currier. Her night watch beside the stranger now dead whom she'd known and loved for nearly thirty years.

Well as she knew the book, it held fresh, sure news tonight: In some measure, this was Lynn Currier's own story. Her first volume, autobiographical as so many of the 'firsts' are that spill out of the early twenties... Like fireflies there lit in her memory small incidents scattered through the half dozen straight novels and the other gay one. Unmistakable recurring patterns, like motifs in music, transposed from key to key, from major to minor, but constant. The writer's own. And taken together, so deeply revealing..

Agnes Dawes lived the story as never before in all her hundred readings. Print on pages faded, and she <u>was</u> Cy Rawlings, rigid silent, with that reform-school chapter hidden in her past. Taken on sufferance as swimming coach. Burning up, eaten hollow with passion for Honora that must be as rigorously hidden. And Honora, athletic director, tall, cool, gallant... Oh Lynn, <u>you</u> were Honora! You knew that dam fool spoiled brat lost her ring in swimming- and lied. But with no proof, and the evidence - trivial diabolical circumstancial evidence - against Cy, and that hidden chapter bound to come out if... Into what quicksands did you walk once, Lynn...and for whom?

To the core she was Cy, shivering in her cabin, listening for the detective's step, planning how to kill herself if Honora believed... Then, panicked by the silence, peering out over the marsh and seeing - suddenly grasping Honora's game, knowing its end - and that to save <u>her</u>!

She ran out shrieking...too late.

A scrape in Agnes Dawes' throat brought her back. She must have uttered some croaking dream parody of Cy's scream. The cigaret pack was an empty crumple, the bottle held little more than an inch. How? When? But these images were only a dull one-dimensional mural, an irrelevance, behind Cy's searing agony.

Honora! she moaned, flung fist on the rough boards of the cabin floor, tearing them with her nails. Honora, my life! Wait for me, I'm coming too... Not in the book, that. But it had happened. And Honora...Lynn didn't die actually... not then... She came in through the cabin door.

Oh Lynn, I meant to write. Don't go without understanding that... Somehow it was Lynn herself...here...not Honora bending over Cy in a cabin. Lynn in this room, tall, sardonic, an unfamiliar white streak in the dark hair, clothes of today, not those in the only - the 1940 - picture...

Lynn, Lynn, I love you. I've loved you thirty years. If we'd met you'd have been the only one, forever, you must understand that... Don't leave me...

Color was fading from even the dull one-dimensional mural now, its grays running together in a dim blur. But Lynn stood clear...a thin color-slide projected faintly on a mottling gray wall...

With unmoving lips Lynn said: I know, I've always known. There'll be no one else for either of us now...

The transparent strong brown hand reached out for her fingers.

Suddenly all the lights were out and it was incredibly, deathly cold... But Agnes Dawes was happier than she had ever been...in her life.

THE LADDER welcomes any and all contributions in the form of articles, stories, poems and artwork either for illustrations inside the magazine or possible covers.

A SYMPOSIUM
How Homosexuality Fits In

Those of you in the Bay Area who have expressed interest in attending ONE Institute's program of homophile studies in Los Angeles (THE LADDER, July, 1957) now have a chance to obtain much of the material presented at the Institute in a week of meetings to be held in San Francisco November 11-17.

A Symposium entitled "How Homosexuality Fits In" will be co-sponsored by the Daughters of Bilitis and ONE, Inc. This will include a concentration of the material presented at the Los Angeles Institute.

The first four sessions of the week-long Symposium will be conducted by W. Dorr Legg, acting director of the Institute; the following three by James Kepner, Jr., instructor at ONE Institute.

All classes will be held at 465 Geary Street, Studio 30, San Francisco, starting Monday, Nov. 11. The program is as follows:

Nov. 11, 8-10 p.m. SQUAW MEN AND AMAZONS
Some Sex Customs of Our Ancestors

Nov. 12, 8-10 p.m. THE GLORY THAT WAS GREECE
Men and Women Who Made It Great

Nov. 13, 8-10 p.m. THE "NEW ATHENS" IN AMERICA
Some Intellectual and Social Currents Examined

Nov. 14, 8-10 p.m. MORES AND MORALS
Femininity, Masculinity and Philosophy

Nov. 15, 8-10 p.m. IS YOUR BODY HOMOSEXUAL?
Evidence From Biology and Medicine

Nov. 16, 8-10 p.m. THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS
Disaster, or Decadence? Germany as an Example

Nov. 17, 3-5 p.m. THE CURSE OF EVE AND THE CURSE OF SODOM
Religious Doctrines Down Through the Ages

Nov. 17, 7-9 p.m. HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATIONS: WHERE ARE THEY HEADED?
Roundtable and coffee - open to those attending at least three previous sessions

Tuition for all eight sessions is $10; for any three, $5; single sessions are $2. Checks may be made payable to Daughters of Bilitis or ONE, Incorporated. Further information may be obtained by writing the DOB at 693 Mission St., Room 308, San Francisco, or calling EXbrook 7-0773.

We strongly urge everyone interested to take advantage of this chance to learn more about the homophile problem.

DISGUISE

A mask I wear
For the world to see.
I put on a show
Even for Thee.

It's been so long
Oh, can it be
That I have lost
What's really me?

- Audrey Kern

a review

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

The Interplayer's production of Lillian Hellman's tense drama "The Children's Hour", which recently completed a three-month run at the Bella Union Theater in San Francisco, has received loud acclaim from critics and audiences alike.

The drama, hailed as one of the most moving and vivid portrayals of the unveiling of repressed homosexuality, has set intellectual and emotional gears in motion wherever presented.

Miss Hellman, author of the theatrical bombshell, described it as "a play about a lie and the havoc that it brings to the lives of the principal characters." This, in my estimation, is a very inadequate description of the drama, as Miss Hellman neglected to add that the "lie" (a false accusation of overt Lesbianism on the part of the two female school teachers around whom the play is centered) was not, in actuality, a lie! The motives are there if not the means for their immediate disposition. The mind, in this case, merely speculates whereas the heart knows all along.

This play, born and nurtured in the mind of Miss Hellman will always be more than just a play, for the writer is certain that there were many in the audience the night I was present, and there will be many in innumerable future performances to come, who will read into the drama a certain deadly but ever-present self-identification. It is for these that the play, whether obvious or inobvious to its author at the time of its first performance, was actually written.

- Jann Miller

YOU

To accept the advice of others is dangerous whenever it is contrary to your own inner convictions of what is right or wrong for you. If, honestly, before God, you admit you are a homosexual, and the idea of attempting to live a "faked" heterosexual life is obnoxious to you, then DON'T attempt it. Not even to win the esteem of a person or persons who might applaud such an attempt. Their approval would not be worth the price it cost.

However, if advice given to you is good, such as an aid in helping you to BE YOURSELF and yet do so without creating disturbances with those who are unlike you, then you will know it is advice you should heed.

You will know it, because your own heart will feel a spontaneous agreement.

You are of a sexual minority, but that does not mean you are one whit less fine, courageous and capable of contributing much good to the whole of life, than is anyone belonging to the sexual majority.

You are you! Don't ever underestimate your assets and the good points that are your very own.

You are an individual, as is every human being. Have the courage and, if necessary acquire the skill to live successfully as the individual you are.

Leaves, snowflakes and fingerprints have thir separate distinct pattern. Don't fight and cry out complaints because you, too, are a distinct individual. Homosexuals are like heterosexuals in some ways yet unlike them in others. So what? No two persons of either sexual group are exactly alike. No two heterosexuals, no two homosexuals are alike in every manner. Nature gave us the charm of infinite variety. YOU ARE YOU! Rejoice in that fact.

Don't curse Nature for placing you at what you may wrong-

ly consider a cruel disadvantage. Look closely at all the facts and bless Nature for the advantages she has given you. Yes, I said ADVANTAGES. If you are honest you will see that you do have advantages -- even in spite of much of society's stupidity and prejudice regarding your kind.

By using every thing you thought was against you as grist for your mill of self-development you will find real meaning, new zest in daily living.

The very opposition you face, can be used as a burning forge upon which the metal of your character is shaped and molded into a thing of power and beauty.

You have control of your reactions. Others may act as they will, but if you react in a constructive manner toward your own individuality you will always grow stronger regardless of any outer pressure.

For you -- life is not always a garden of roses. Is it for anyone? Yet, you always have the secret flower of your own individuality, that, if you will let it, will bloom even in a desert waste.

Once you become real friends with God, it will be easier to work out any difficulties that occur between yourself and your fellow human beings. To become real friends with your Creator you must have your own feeling of closeness to Him. Certain religious concepts are satisfying to many people. There are other people who must do their own reaching out and finding, apart from ritual and creed. Wherever, however one finds God and companions with the Spirit over all, for that one, the joy of trusting God is made manifest. You can find your own way, but to be happy in this world, you MUST find God. Select the path best suited to you and if you seek God, you will indeed find Him and be aware of His loving Presence. God's Presence is with you, but you must be aware of it to receive its blessings.

Be glad you are the distinct personality you are. Hold your head proudly. Consider how Nature has worked through your ancestors to determine your physical and mental make-

up to a large degree. Acknowledge that the accumulated experiences you have had since your birth, plus the ways you have reacted to these experiences have also had an important influence in determining the sort of an individual you are now.

Then most important of all, realize that the immortal spirit within you was given to you by God, and when you trust God and your own inner spirituality you have a guidance and protection that never fails.

You have your very own likes and dislikes, your own ideals and standards. You know more about yourself than does anyone else on earth. And so you have a right to form your own set of values. You know what you want from life. All right, then teach yourself to get it, without harming others, and with as little conflict as possible.

So if you love someone whose values are as your own, there is no need to expose that love to the glare of the spotlight of public knowledge. No need to offer yourselves up to be nailed on the cross of mass misunderstanding and condemnation. (Not unless you happen to enjoy suffering.)

Only an exhibitionist must expose his private life in order to enjoy it. The only exception is found if homosexual partners reveal their private lives in an attempt to show the world that such unions can be, and often are, fine and decent, and that they contribute much to the sum total good of today's world. Those who attempt this are born CRUSADERS who are dedicated to the Cause. They realize the risk involved, but they consider it a calculated risk. You alone know in your heart whether or not you are willing to take it. Unless you feel very sure of yourself in meeting any problems that exposure might bring forth, then it is wiser to keep your private life private.

But this does not mean you need to be a hypocrite. Only a fool or a coward will seek to appease mass thinking by attempting to be what another person or mass concept says one should be. BE YOURSELF!

The only right changes for an individual are those prompted by a sincere belief and one's honest reactions

to the situations that confront one, and the experiences through which one passes.

So you do have conflicts and so you must face issues. Who on earth does not? No one who is still breathing. Conflicts and the facing of issues is one thing that homosexuals share with heterosexuals. The conflicts and the issues may differ for these two groups as they may differ among individuals, but they are there.

It isn't so important to try to avoid them, though in some cases this may seem wise. But it is vitally important to learn to handle both conflicts and issues with skill. And to maintain a healthy sense of balance -- nothing helps so much as to feel that when the going is tough you have the aid that comes of knowing you are holding on to God's hand. And this you CAN do if you only try.

The most satisfying life is the one a person lives in his own way, being true to his deep convictions, and trusting God.

Who ever you are, where ever you may be, God bless YOU.

-Carol Hales

* * *

YOUR HANDWRITING REVEALS YOU

That your handwriting discloses the real you was proved to everyone's satisfaction at the September public discussion meeting of the Daughters of Bilitis.

William Baker, national president of the American Graphological Society, declared that the psychological and physical being of a person comes through in his or her handwriting. Your handwriting tells the truth about you. It does not, however, foretell the future or the age or sex of the writer.

In analyzing handwriting the entire picture of the writing is taken into consideration, Mr. Baker pointed

out, including the width of the margins and the slant of the words and lines.

For the benefit of those who could not attend, the following are capsule analyses of individual letters and characteristics:

Speed and spontaneity in writing mean truthfulness. Slow writing is suspect; too fast writing may mess things up and lead thoughts astray.

Downhill slant shows depression or pessimism, or a bad physical condition.

Uphill writing shows optimism. In business letters (particularly signatures) the uphill slant shows ambition and self-endorsement.

Straight line writing is the sign of a rigid person.

Wavy lines of writing indicate a person changeable in moods.

Rounded letters show a self-conscious, lazy, comfort-loving person. Angular letters are characteristic of the narrow personality.

The upper areas (loops) of letters indicate the values of a person (ideals, love); the middle area shows how the daily work is done; the lower areas (loops) point out the natural instincts bothering the writer.

Any swing to the left in a letter indicates regression to childhood. Adolescents, particularly girls, often go through a period of backhand writing showing their confusion with the complex world into which they are being thrown.

The letter D written with an ell-like look betokens a person of exceeding sensitivity with feelings that are easily hurt.

Open letters are the sign of unbalanced ambition;

points in letters are hostility jabs.

A pointed arch on an M or N indicates the conniver or a person with a fetish - or both. A figure-eight lower loop is the sign of the Lesbian.

Perpendicular writing is the sign of a head-ruled person. Writing which slants from 85 degrees to 55 degrees is acceptable, showing a good balance between the head and heart. More slant indicates the person pretty close to a neurotic breakdown. A regular slant points out will-power and good organization.

Broken words are a token of a highly intuitive person. Those who keep all their words connected have good reason and logic.

A circle dot over anI I is the sign of the seeker for beauty.

A tee crossed solidly straight across the stem indicates a good student and intelligence. One crossed low shows a person interested in physical satisfaction. The impractical daydreamer crosses his tee high above the stem. An upslant cross is the sign of a good and loyal friend; the critical person, prone to take unfair advantage, slants his cross down. The extremely down slanting cross, like a club, betokens destruction of things, or people.

You who cross several tees with one bold slash just can't be bothered with little details.

Large writing characterizes the person of big ideas but no follow-through. The small writer is the detailist, has follow-through and probably literary ability.

The perpendicular stroke is masculine; the rounded stroke is feminine.

Although the above are but a surface introduction to this fascinating subject, if you apply them to your own handwriting you may be surprised and intrigued. Those at the meeting were.

LESBIANA

29. THE ILLUSIONIST by Francoise Mallet-Joris. Farrar, Strauss & Cudahy, 1952. Also published as The Loving and The Daring by Popular Library, 1957.

An adolescent girl, in her need for companionship, turns to the charms of her father's confidante. A more complex relationship ensues, ending with a surprising and ironic twist.

30. ADVENTURES OF KING PAUSOLE by Pierre Louys (1901). Collected Works of Pierre Louys, Shakespeare House, 1951.

The Lesbian comique! A brilliant satire on Parisian days and nights in the never-never land of King Pausole. An elopement of the king's daughter and an amusing sequence of events characterize this rare and comic study.

31. WOMEN IN LOVE by D.H. Lawrence. Phoenix edition, London, 1954. Avon Publications, Inc., New York.

This lengthy tale of the amours of women includes part of a chapter devoted to a young girl's fascination for her teacher. The climax of this fascination occurs during a swimming scene.

32. THE LOVE SEEKERS by Leonora Hornblow. Simon and Schuster, 1957.

A very modern and quite well written novel with approximately one-fifth of the book telling the story of the lonely young Lesbian Mab, and her tragic love affair and the rather macabre developments surrounding it. An interesting sidelight, the main feminine protagonist is sympathetic and voluble in her complete defense of Mab throughout the book.

LOVE IN THE SOUTH SEAS

LOVE IN THE SOUTH SEAS by Bengt Danielson, Anthropologist on the Kon-Tiki Voyage. Reynal & Co., 1956.

A person never knows his own culture well until he has viewed other peoples, other ways, and then looks back upon his own with a new perspective. Such is Dr. Danielson's penetrating analysis of Polynesian culture in contrast to our own.

Contrary to popular concepts, the Polynesians were not moral anarchists but, rather, slaves to customs all their own. To begin with, they have valued above all a comfortable life, with enjoyment and a full spontaniety of feelings, quite in contrast to our Western values of emotional suppression and competition for economic wealth. Their valuations of spontaneity have been most marked in their sexual attitudes.

"It cannot be denied that compared with us Westerners the Polynesians seem abnormally oversexed. But this is primarily because we are so repressed and puritanical; in reality, it is not the Polynesians but our own attitude toward sex and love that is peculiar and abnormal.

"World-wide anthropological data shows that of the 118 peoples on whose attitude toward sex matters we have detailed information, only two Negro peoples are anything like as puritanical and anti-sexual as us Westerners.

"The Polynesians considered that love was an art, which could and should be learnt.

"They avoided a too violent conflict between 'normal and abnormal' persons by allowing homosexuality to a limited extent and giving social sanction to those who wished to live as transvestites."

Not that the islands were an ideal paradise, for they were burdened with a rigid caste system and many taboos. Nor could we adopt the Polynesian ways of sexual freedom without a drastic alteration of our whole social and religious organization and ideals. Yet Dr. Danielson does

offer some pertinent proposals on what we might learn from the Polynesians:

1. A consistent moral code instead of ours of a "bewildering quantity of incompatible and contradictory standards."

2. A positive attitude toward sexuality - to have an appreciative attitude rather than branding it as something base and sinful.

3. A realistic conception of love: "Our sentimental and romantic ideal of love is undoubtedly responsible for the failures of so many marriages. The Polynesians instead attach decisive importance to such qualities as beauty, temperament, common interests and outlooks, without anyone being the worse for it."

-Barbara Stephens

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday, November 1 - Gab 'n Java session at 6340 Geary St., Apt. 19, 8 p.m. Informal bull session for women only.

Week of November 11 - 17 - Symposium on "How Homosexuality Fits In". See Page 12 for details.

Wednesday, November 20 - Monthly business meeting, 2174 California St. (basement apartment). Members are urged to bring their questionnaires with all additions and deletions indicated.

Tuesday, November 26 - Leo Zeff, clinical psychologist, will speak on "Depth Psychology and Religion" at the public discussion meeting at 465 Geary St. The room has been changed to Studio 30 (third floor). Time remains 8:15 p.m.

READERS RESPOND

Please accept my thanks for the excellent "coverage in depth" which was so evident in your report on the Fourth Annual Convention of the Mattachine Society, Inc., in your September issue under the byline of Sten Russell. She told not only who spoke, but what they said - something that is seldom done so well.

I wish also to express gratitude for the fine support given to the Mattachine convention by members and friends of the Daughters of Bilitis, evident from attendance by women of the sessions.

Hal Call, Editor
Mattachine Review

• • • • •

I received the September issue this morning and find I have to answer one or two things immediately. First to E.T. of Decker, Ind., the book you ask about is a very rare biography entitled "Chase of the Wild Goose" by Mary Louisa Gordon, published by the Hogarth Press in England in 1936.

It concerns the life and love affair of Lady Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, known to literary history as the "Ladies of Llangollen" because they ran away from their aristocratic Irish homes together and went to live in the beautiful valley of Llangollen in Wales. They lived together in harmony for 50 years before death separated them.

They left behind for posterity a journal written primarily by the elder of the two, Lady Butler. This all took place, by the way, between 1750 and 1800. I doubt if you will be able to obtain the book to buy, but it can be gotten to read by inter-

library loan through either the Library of Congress or Chapel Hill University Library, University of North Carolina. Your local librarian will be able to borrow this for you and the only charge is postage and insurance.

Next I was truly sorry to see that the first copy of "Olivia" in your library came from so far away. I am ashamed of myself and I hope a few other readers will be also. I am enclosing my check for $10 for your book fund.

I am also enclosing a few well-marked current second hand book catalogs. With a little perserverance you can obtain almost any of approximately 100 titles on female homosexuality for $1 each - I know, I have done it.

To all who want to know how to find books, contact one of the large second hand book centers

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as it concerns the Lesbian...Written and edited by women, published by the Daughters of Bilitis, Inc.

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and request their free catalogs. Then with them on one side of you and Jeannette Foster's bibliography (Sex Variant Women in Literature, see THE LADDER, May, 1957) you are in business. Three of the secondhand bookstores are:

Biblo and Tannen Books
63 Fourth Ave.
New York, NY

Central Book Store
36 South Clark St.
Chicago, Ill.

Gladys Foreman's Books
908 Hyperion Ave.
Los Angeles, Calif.

All of these will supply free catalogs on request with delight.

B.G., Kansas City, Kan.

* * * * *

I wish to compliment you and your staff upon the work you are doing out there. May this not-too-small beginning grow into a movement of the tremendous proportions it deserves!

And may I add I appreciate the 'more cheerful tone' your magazine displays than other homosexual periodicals. As you so well know, variants meet with enough depressing material on this subject in the general press - without having to encounter in with in their own literature! Everyone whom I know personally agrees with me upon this. We might sacrifice a few "strong endings", a certain amount of "realism", and copy the "slicks" in this matter. If readers of general magazines want "happy conclusions", how much

GROWING PAINS DON'T HURT!

(continued from page 6)

of interest to the homophile, fiction, and poetry. While THE LADDER is published by the Daughters of Bilitis, the editorial matter does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization. The publication is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view.

Membership in the DOB now numbers 45; there are approximately 400 subscribers to THE LADDER. These numbers represent considerable growth in the past year. From vague ideas have come a concrete program. In the next year it is hoped that the tag ends which are still flapping will be tied in and that participation in the varied activities of the Daughters of Bilitis will continue to grow.

- Del Martin

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more so does the homosexual need the encouragement, the satisfaction, that is to be found with a story which closes with a promise.

In summing up the above, I shall add that, true, there must be exceptions. But I hope THE LADDER will continue to stress that side of homosexuality which is bright and beautiful and inspiring.

May I compliment Jo Allyn on her "Eleventh Hour"? It was both a well-written and interesting story. In line with the above, however, I should like to say that I wish the conclusion might have been more definite - with emphasis on the rewarding life that Hazel and Pat might have built together. After all, any reader acquainted with psychological teachings would say that Hazel was not constituted so as to "make your marriage work". Although Pat was trying to be big and noble, some

readers felt she was out of character in not being more shrewd. Not, that is, viewing the picture in its entirety. After all, Pat was not committing the unpardonable: Breaking up a happy marriage!

F.L., Peace Dale, R.I.

* * * * *

I am enclosing a money order for $3. Would you please send me, with the October issue, another copy of the September issue. In my opinion it is really one of your best ones.

M.T., Providence, R. I.

* * * * *

Thank you so much for accepting me into your group. I've enjoyed reading THE LADDER very much. Everything in the two copies I have read has been very enjoyable and worthwhile reading. I think your magazine has a very commendable attitude - without the bitterness which too many of us are too tempted to feel and express. I hope that someday I may contribute something of value for THE LADDER.

A.K., Lawrence, Kan.

* * * * *

I am currently a subscriber to your publication THE LADDER. My first issue was the June, 1957, one. I notice that it is Volume 1, Number 9. I presume there were eight preceding issues. Could you please advise me on the availability of these eight issues, and the cost of obtaining them?

Please accept my best wishes for continued suc-

cess to your organization and affiliated publication. I hope in the future to be able to make a small financial contribution to aid you in your work.

J.J., Fargo, N.D.

For information on the FIRST FIVE issues of THE LADDER, currently collectors items, see page 30. Single copies of the magazine from March, 1957, to the present are available at 50 cents each. Readers may also start their subscriptions with any copy from March on. - ED.

• • • • •

I enclose $10 for which I would appreciate your sending your splendid publication to the libraries of any universities of your choice.

I enjoy THE LADDER immensely. Keep up the good work. As soon as possible I will send you another small donation.

S.P., Medford, Ore.

• • • • •

Your publication has been of great value to me in understanding myself better and in getting other people to understand the homosexual problem in a favorable light.

My parents have been reading each issue and it has helped our relationship in many ways.

I only wish that I was near enough to help you in the wonderful work you are doing.

N.M., Baltimore, Md.

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CONTRIBUTIONS are gratefully accepted from anyone who wishes to assist us in our work. We are a non-profit corporation working entirely on donated labor. Our fees are not of such amounts as to allow for much expansion of the publication. While men may not become members of the *Daughters of Bilitis, Inc.*, many have expressed interest in our efforts and our publication and have made contributions to further our work. Of course, anyone over 21 years of age may subscribe to *THE LADDER*.

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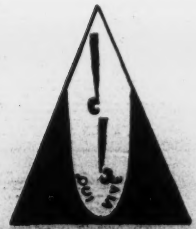
I am over 21 years of age (Signed) _____